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Insurance firm bows to ACT UP

Activists pressure Lloyd's of London to reverse its HIV policy that denied protection to people who contracted the virus through sex or drug use

By Elizabeth Yukins

NEW YORK—A significant victory was scored against HIV insurance discrimination recently when ACT UP/New York successfully pressured an insurance agency to withdraw its policy that denied coverage based on the perceived way a person contracted HIV. The contested policy extended benefits only to people who were exposed to HIV through blood transfusions or prenatal transmission. People who had contracted HIV through sexual contact or drug use were explicitly excluded from the policy coverage.

Charging that the insurance carrier, Lloyds of London, was selling a prejudiced and unfair policy, members of ACT UP's Insurance and Healthcare Access Committee organized a nationwide effort to demand that Lloyds change its position. After a seven-month long campaign, ACT UP announced June 6 that the insurance company has agreed to issue a new, non-discriminatory policy. The company has also agreed to drop the HIV clause from any contracts that have already been sold in the U.S.

"It was an incredible victory because Lloyds of London is such a huge insurance company," Wayne Kawadler, a member of ACT UP's Insurance Committee, told *GCN*. "It is a precedent-setting move because it says that neither Lloyds nor any other insurance carrier can discriminate against

people with HIV," he said, adding, "It sends out a message that says international companies can't come to the U.S. to do business and expect to bring their homophobic and AIDS-discriminatory policies with them."

'We don't like your tone'

ACT UP began protesting Lloyds last autumn, when the group learned that the exclusionary policy was being offered to the 11,000 members of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA). Union members who were dissatisfied with the policy sought assistance and possible legal recourse from both ACT UP and the American Civil Liberties Union AIDS Project.

According to NATCA's senior director for legislative affairs, John Thornton, Lloyds is the only insurance carrier that would offer the union a disability plan. He told *GCN*, "It is very difficult to get disability coverage for air traffic controllers because of the high stress and burnout rate of the job." Thornton said that although NATCA did not approve of the HIV clause, Lloyds refused to negotiate about the policy.

ACT UP's Kawadler, however, said that both Lloyds and NATCA were at fault for allowing the policy to stand. He said that when ACT UP contacted NATCA and the Lloyds' officials demanding that the discriminatory clause be withdrawn, they received negative responses from both parties and were told by NATCA, "We don't like your tone."

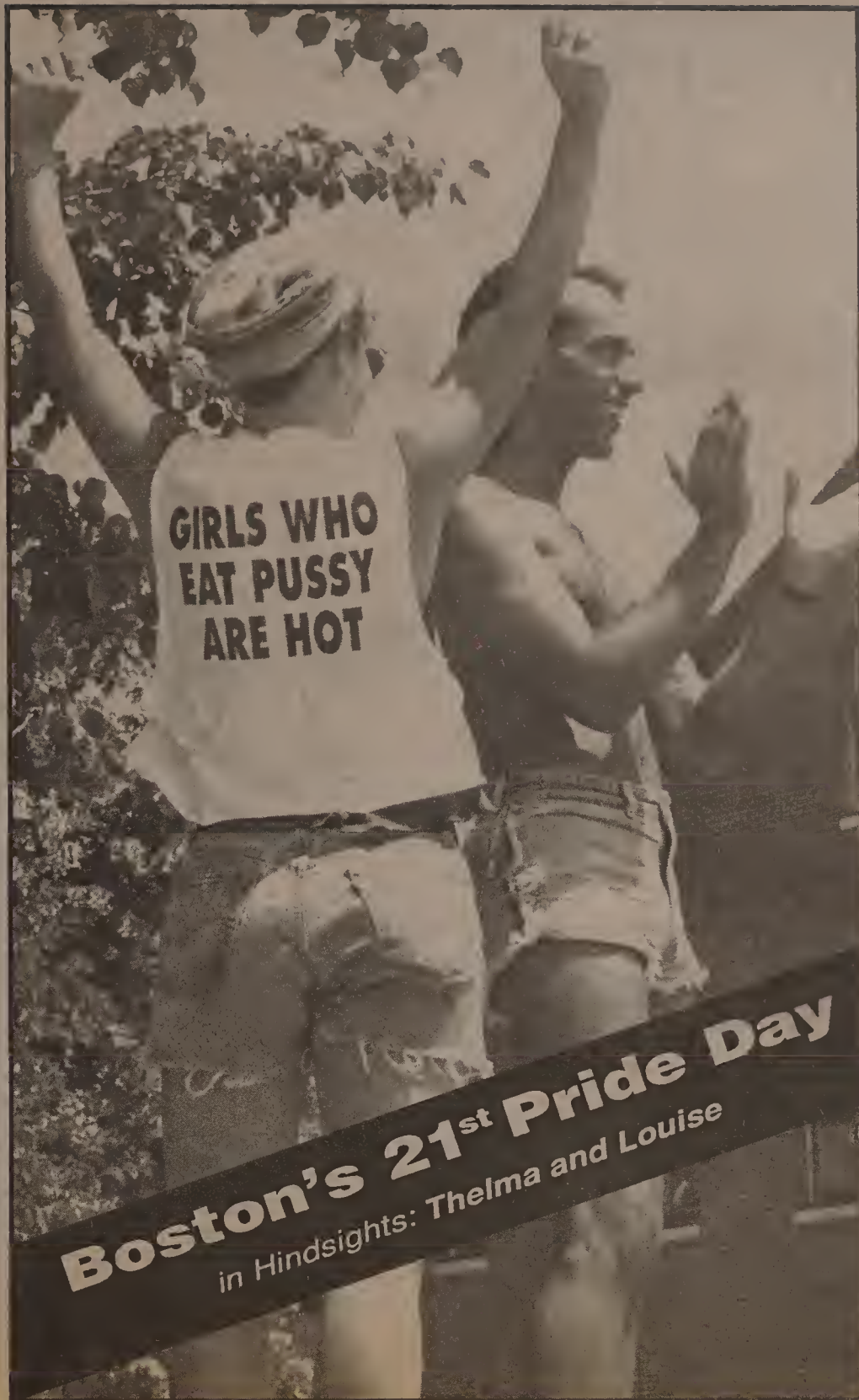
Kawadler said this response generated a nationwide phone zap and letter-writing campaign directed at both organizations. He further said that ACT UP asked all state insurance departments in the country to determine whether Lloyds' HIV clause complied with state laws.

According to Kenneth Bing, another member of ACT UP's Insurance Committee, the letters sent to the state insurance commissioners proved to be powerful legal and political weapons. Bing told *GCN* that although many states said they were not able to challenge Lloyds, commissioners from Kentucky and Missouri said that the discriminatory policy was illegal in their states.

"The Kentucky commissioner did a thorough investigation of the policy and really put the pressure on Lloyds," said Bing, adding, "I think Lloyds' attorneys recognized that if Kentucky was going to be on the ball, other states would likely follow."

According to Bing, Lloyds responded to

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Reception for Republican governor causes rift

An event hosted by a Boston gay group is protested by a coalition of gay, lesbian, labor and women's rights activists

By Elizabeth Yukins

BOSTON—A reception for the governor and lieutenant governor that was organized by the Greater Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance has triggered much protest, debate and dissension among activists in the local gay community. The June 10 reception prompted a coalition of approximately 60 labor, AIDS and women's rights advocates to protest outside the event. Chanting "Gay rights are not enough," the group denounced both Republican Gov. William Weld and the Alliance's choice to host him.

Many gay rights activists say that the reception and the demonstration brought attention once again to the diverse political, economic and social make-up of the lesbian and gay community. By protesting the decision to host Weld and distancing themselves from the Alliance's political agenda, the demonstrators raised issues about class, gender and economic parity in the gay community.

"We wanted to show that not all lesbians and gay men, as individuals or as a group, support Weld," said Randy Albelda, one of the organizers of the demonstration. "The gay community is credited with being a crucial source of votes for him during last year's election, but we believe that his performance does not merit our further support," she said.

Albelda told *GCN* that Weld's budget cuts are seriously hurting, "and even killing," lesbians and gay men. "His cuts to General Relief, Medicaid, housing, education and disability programs are devastating members of the gay community," she said, adding, "As an elected politician, we think he has betrayed what we consider are important issues."

Kay Diaz, another member of the protest coalition that calls itself Lesbians and Gay Men Against Weld, said, "The demonstration was primarily directed at Weld, but we also were dissatisfied and disappointed with the Alliance for choosing to host a reception for him." She told *GCN*, "As a group concerned with economic justice, we made a decision

that we will not separate our gay identity from our larger selves. We are not only gay and lesbian people, but also women, state workers, disabled people, students and people in need of health care."

Gay warnings

The demonstration seriously affected attendance at the reception. After learning about the protest and the issues raised, City Councilors David Scondras and Rosaria Salerno and City Council candidate Jackson Hall chose not to attend the function. Abner Mason, another council candidate, opted to attend the reception, saying, "Weld is doing an incredible job at trying to bring fiscal responsibility to this state.... I have some of the same concerns as these protesters, but I think that Weld represents positive change which I support."

Most visibly absent from the reception were Weld and Lieutenant Governor Paul Cellucci. According to numerous sources closely involved with the event, Weld and Cellucci chose not to attend after they were told about the protest and urged not to go by Mike Duffy, chair of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, and David LaFontaine, a member of the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights.

While Duffy did not return *GCN*'s phone calls, LaFontaine acknowledged that he did warn Cellucci about the demonstration. LaFontaine said he was disturbed by the fact that one of the Alliance's board members, Michael Cronin, was involved with the protest, and that the Alliance chose to host the event despite internal conflict.

"I felt that it was going to compromise the Alliance's ability to work with the governor's administration," LaFontaine told *GCN*. "I have been involved with working with both the Alliance and the administration, and I was embarrassed to see this happening," he added. "If it had been other groups, independent of the Alliance, organizing the protest, that would have been fine," said LaFontaine, "but I thought it was bizarre for

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HIV hysteria leads to jailing

MARTIN, Tenn.—Police here recently charged a woman with reckless endangerment because she failed to tell rescue workers about her fiance's HIV status. Saying that she panicked when her fiance collapsed from a heart attack, the woman, Connie Lewis, did not tell an off-duty police officer who performed mouth-to-mouth resuscitation that her fiance, James Cobern, was HIV positive.

Although the federal Centers for Disease Control has not documented any cases of HIV transmission through contact with saliva, police officials charge that the assisting police officer could have been exposed to HIV during the mouth-to-mouth resuscitation procedure. According to the *New York Times*, Lewis could face up to six years in prison if found guilty.

"The police showed up at my door right after the funeral services," said Lewis. "They told me they were charging me with reckless endangerment," she added. "I just didn't understand because I would never hurt anybody."

Lewis, an unemployed nursing assistant, was arrested and jailed for five days earlier this month. She was freed on a \$2500 bond, and her case will be reviewed by a county grand jury in September.

Police charge that Lewis intentionally did not tell rescue workers that her husband was HIV positive.

"She knew in the back of her mind that if she told someone he had AIDS, no one would help her," said Larry Baker, the officer who tried to revive Cobern. "I wouldn't have touched him," he added.

The Martin chief of police, Jackie Moore, said that he would not expect any of his 18 officers to perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on a person with HIV.

Lewis denies that she purposefully withheld information. She said that in her concern about her husband's heart attack, she did not think about his HIV status.

"I was panicked. I didn't even think about it," said Lewis. "When I remembered the HIV, I told the ambulance people right then." —Elizabeth Yukins

New dictionary includes 'womyn'

NEW YORK—Random House has released a new dictionary that begins to address the issue of sexist and culturally offensive language. In its new Webster's College Dictionary, published May 15, Random House claims to have eliminated sexist language from its definitions and to have paid more attention to the potential offensiveness of certain words.

The dictionary is careful to point out the various connotations of words that are often deemed offensive. According to the *New York Times*, the entry for the word "girl" now includes a usage note that says, "Many women today resent being called girls." The definition further points out that the use of the term "bachelor girl" for an unmarried woman is "frequently regarded as offensive," and that the term "working girl" for a woman who works "is declining in use."

The Random House lexicographers also substituted the words "they" and "their" for the word "he" to indicate a person of the unknown sex, and included an appendix called "Avoiding Sexist Language." The new mainstream dictionary even defines "womyn" as an alternative to "women" in order "to avoid the suggestion of sexism perceived in the sequence of m-e-n."

The dictionary has not gone without criticism from traditional, conservative lexicographers, but the executive director of Random House Dictionaries, Sol Steinmetz, contends that what these critics "don't take into account is the whole question of emphasis."

Steinmetz said that, "Children go to school and they see the whole emphasis on 'man' and on 'he.' Eventually it makes a dent, gives a sense of the physical, biological man as the center of things."

Despite its progress, however, the dictionary still includes many traditional, and some argue outdated, definitions. While the dictionary has added such words as "homophobia" and "heterosexism," the book's primary definition for gay is "having or showing a merry, lively mood." —Elizabeth Yukins

Florida governor signs hate crimes law

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—In an important victory for lesbian and gay civil rights in Florida, Gov. Lawton Chiles signed legislation May 24 that adds sexual

orientation to the state's Hate Crimes Act. Under the new law, which goes into effect Oct. 1, criminal offenses based on sexual orientation will be punishable by enhanced penalties.

According to *The Weekly News*, a Florida gay newspaper, the legislation also requires the state's Department of Law Enforcement to collect data on anti-gay hate crimes. This information will then be given to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in accordance with the national Hate Crimes Statistics Act.

Lesbian and gay activists who lobbied for the bill were unsure if Chiles would endorse it. The governor had until midnight on May 24 to decide whether to sign the measure, veto it, or allow it to become law without his signature. Throughout the deadline day, gubernatorial aides said they did not know what Chiles intended to do with the bill.

"I'm thrilled he signed it," said Marta Hardy, a Florida Task Force lobbyist. "For a while it looked like he would just let it go without his signature," she added.

The bill had previously received the state Senate's approval by a vote of 33-3 on April 26. The measure passed in the House May 1 by a 79-29 majority.

"I think the entire community should feel very good because we are now finally getting started," said Hardy, adding, "This is the first major issue dealing with sexual orientation that we have gotten through on a state level."

—Elizabeth Yukins

Arkansas library bans gay book

ROGERS, Ark.—Citing complaints by some patrons who said they were offended by homosexuality, the Rogers-Hough Memorial Library recently pulled *Intimacy Between Men* from its shelves.

The move prompted more than four dozen people to attend the library's Board meeting in May. "Once we open our doors to this type of material, where do we stop?" said Greg Bledsoe of Teens United for Freedom. "We can not allow such people to bully society into bowing to their wishes," said Bledsoe.

Another attendee, Hank Wehmeyer, said that he was opposed to *Intimacy Between Men* because it goes against Christian teaching. Countered Patricia Simmons, "I'd like to remind Mr. Wehmeyer that it is not a requirement in this city to be a Christian."

"I'll choose my reading material and you choose yours," she said.

The board is to decide by its June 18 meeting whether or not the book will be returned to the library's shelves.

—Ann Colbourn

National gay rights bill gains momentum

WASHINGTON—A record number of senators and representatives are backing the proposed civil rights bill that would ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

The watershed level of support was reached May 14 when Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) and Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) signed onto the Senate and House versions of the bill, which is formally known as the Civil Rights Amendments Act of 1991.

The bill would ban anti-gay discrimination on the federal level in employment, housing, public accommodations and government-assisted programs. The bill has been introduced to Congress many times, yearly since 1985. Although the proposal has not seen formal action since 1981, lesbian and gay activists are lobbying for hearings to be held before the end of the current session.

—Ann Colbourn

Report urges better health care for women

WASHINGTON—Reproductive problems are the leading killer of women of child-bearing age worldwide, but most of the problems could be prevented with better access to health care and contraception, according to a study released June 8.

The Worldwatch Institute report said that each year at least one million women will die and more than 100 million will suffer disabling illnesses from pregnancy complications, childbirth and unsafe abortion.

Jodi Jacobson, author of the report, said that the annual number of women dying from reproductive problems is expected to double by the year 2000 "without a reordering of priorities in health care and family planning."

According to the *Washington Post*, the report's mortality estimates did not include deaths from pelvic inflammatory disease

(PID) or sexually transmitted diseases for which no figures are available.

Jacobson said that approximately 75 percent of maternal deaths can be attributed to five problems: hemorrhage, infection, toxemia, obstructed labor and complications from unsafe abortion.

The report follows two recent Supreme Court decisions that prohibit abortion counseling in U.S.-funded family planning programs here and abroad. (See *GCN*, Vol. 18, Nos. 43 and 44.)

Jacobson estimated that an annual per capita investment of \$1.50 would allow most countries to establish programs to provide better health care and family planning services.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Anti-abortionists court disability rights activists

ATLANTA—Leaders of one of the country's largest anti-abortion organizations pledged to strengthen ties with advocates for disability rights because they say that the two movements have common goals.

"I am concerned with the theory gaining in popularity that it is better to be dead than disabled," said Robert Powell, a paraplegic man who was elected vice-president of the National Right-to-Life Committee during its three day convention, June 6-8. "Many of us find it alarming that it is considered acceptable to abort an unborn child just because of disability," he said.

Powell told the *New York Times* that disability rights groups have been historically aligned with liberal Democrats in Congress because they were more willing to spend money to improve access for people with disabilities. He said he plans to work to dispel the "stereotype that we [anti-abortion supporters] are strictly conservative" by having the National Right to Life Committee visibly support access for people with disabilities and other disability rights issues.

Powell said that he acknowledged that many disability rights advocates support a woman's right to chose abortion because they view it as an issue of being able to make decisions about one's own body.

He added, however, that an increasing number of disability rights activists have joined efforts by anti-abortion groups to oppose legislation that would grant people the right to die.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Hate crimes law challenged

WASHINGTON—The Supreme Court announced June 10 that it will hear the appeal of a white Minnesota teenager charged with burning a cross in front of the home of a Black family.

The appeal argues that the St. Paul hate crimes ordinance under which Robert Viktora was charged violates the First Amendment. Viktora's challenge of the St. Paul ordinance is supported by the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union.

"There is a line between harassment and what is so-called offensive, but legally protected, expressions of free speech," said Evan Wolfson of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. "I hope the Court will hand down a careful, narrow ruling affirming that principle," he told *GCN*.

Activists said the Court's decision in the case may have significant legal ramifications for other hate crimes statutes.

According to the *New York Times*, at least 30 states, as well as many individual cities, have recently passed laws that specifically criminalize intimidation or harm towards people based on race, ethnicity, religion and gender. Some of these statutes include "sexual orientation" as a protected category, although St. Paul's does not.

The Minnesota case is the first in which the justices have been asked to interpret a modern hate crimes law. Viktora's appeal argues that St. Paul's hate crimes ordinance violates the First Amendment and is gratuitous because cross burning could be prosecuted under other criminal laws. If the High Court accepts this argument, other hate crime laws could be struck down.

Wolfson said he is also nervous about the possibility that the Court will use the Minnesota case to address the "overbreadth doctrine." This legal theory allows people to use the First Amendment to challenge criminal laws, even if they hold no direct interest in the case.

Viktora's appeal uses the overbreadth doctrine to question the law's broad range, rather than contest the part of the St. Paul ordinance that criminalizes cross-burning. The appeal claims that the ordinance

prohibits free speech and therefore should be rejected in all respects.

If the Supreme Court rejects Viktora's appeal based on his use of the overbreadth doctrine, the legal theory could be disallowed in future First Amendment cases.

"The overbreadth doctrine has been extensively utilized by gay rights and other movements to combat genuinely unconstitutional laws," said Wolfson. "Striking down the doctrine would allow challenges to such laws only when a person is directly affected by the statute, under its particular circumstances," he said.

Wolfson pointed out that people directly affected by criminal laws are often unwilling to risk prosecution by coming forward to challenge their constitutionality.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Gay rights clause passed in Iowa

AMES, Iowa—The City Council passed a measure May 28 that adds sexual orientation to the city's anti-discrimination ordinance. This central Iowa town of 47,000, home of Iowa State University, now joins Iowa City as the only other community in the state with such protection. A similar statewide proposal passed one house of the legislature last year.

Activists who supported the ordinance were part of a city/campus effort to protect and promote diversity in the community. The Ames/ISU Task Force On Equality has been working for the past year to promote the acceptance of all. The sexual orientation amendment was just one of the Task Force's proposals, which range from multicultural education to wheelchair-accessible polling places.

The ordinance bans discrimination in housing, employment, public accommodations, education and credit due to "actual or perceived sexual orientation." Orientation is defined as heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality, but excludes "participation in acts which are prohibited by law." The amendment received unanimous votes on all three of its readings, in sharp contrast to a 1983 attempt to enact a similar law, when only one council member supported it.

The Ames Human Relations Commission, the city agency that will enforce the new law, recommended that the City Council adopt it. As supporting evidence, the commission offered the results of a survey it conducted last year of lesbians and gay men in Ames. Many respondents reported discrimination and violence and said they feared more of the same if they were more open about their sexuality.

To address concerns about possible negative effects of protecting sexual orientation, the Human Relations Commission consulted their counterparts in Iowa City. The Iowa City authorities reported that there have been no problems in enforcing the ordinance in the 15 years it has been in effect.

At the first reading of the Ames ordinance on April 23, the City Council heard comments from a standing-room-only crowd of at least 115 people.

A local psychologist testified that it is difficult to promote the welfare of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people when there is no recourse for discrimination. Members of lesbian/gay/bisexual groups, social service agencies and religious congregations also spoke in favor of the amendment. Several said that it is wrong for a segment of the population not to have equal rights and that defeating the amendment would endorse discrimination and condone violence.

Opponents of the amendment said that sexual orientation is different from the other classes of people that were already protected from discrimination. They maintained that orientation is something a person chooses and has control over, unlike race, nationality, or gender. (No comparison was made to religious beliefs.) A landlord, a small business owner and several ministers said the ordinance would violate the rights of people who did not want homosexuals as employees or renters.

After hearing comments from the public, the council debated the measure briefly. Council member John Parks expressed concern that the amendment would not accomplish all that its proponents hope for because it would apply to a class of people who are not readily identifiable.

The council voted without comment at the second and third readings of the ordinance. It will go into effect as soon as it is published as a legal notice, which should be in about two weeks.

—Allan Beatty

Religious institutions examine gay issues

The ordination of an openly lesbian priest by an Episcopal diocese is the latest controversy

By Jacob Smith Yang

BALTIMORE—Several major Protestant denominations are currently re-examining their policies on gay men and lesbians within the church.

The "discontinuation" of an openly gay United Methodist minister June 13 came barely a week after the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C. ordained its first lesbian priest. Meanwhile, on June 10, the highest governing body of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. overwhelmingly rejected a report urging it to change its traditional strictures against sexual relations among lesbians, gay men and unmarried heterosexuals.

"In each of these instances it is a matter of the grassroots organizations percolating up through the denominations," said Tim Drake, director of the Privacy and Civil Rights Project of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). "This is not being orchestrated by any national gay and lesbian organization, but by gay and lesbian individuals and their supporters within the churches," he told *GCN*.

Body and soul

Elected delegates of the Presbyterian Church's annual General Assembly voted 534 to 31 to set aside the recommendations of a report entitled "Keeping the Body and Soul Together: Sexuality, Spirituality, and Social Justice." A church-appointed panel of clergy and lay people had worked for three years on the 200-page report. It addressed 10 topics, including gay men and lesbians, women's issues, AIDS, people with disabilities, sexual harassment and reproductive technology.

Many of the report's 46 recommendations were specifically pro-gay. These included calls to ordain openly gay candidates for the clergy, develop strategies to combat sodomy laws and other anti-gay legislation, and reject homophobia and heterosexism that prevent gay men and lesbians "from being in full communion with Christ and church."

The report's release, in February, stirred heated debate among local congregations. Many Presbyterians not only condemned the report's findings, but also called for the report to be excluded from the minutes of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly randomly selected a 67-member Assembly Committee to make recommendations about the report during the General Assembly meeting, June 4-12. The Assembly Committee unanimously voted to reject the report June 8.

Rev. Gordon Stewart, who headed the Assembly Committee, said that the report was "not going to be helpful to the church." He said that adopting the report's recommendations would only serve to worsen a perceived rift between its supporters and detractors.

The Assembly Committee's decision to reject the report was approved by a vote in the larger General Assembly. Members also voted to issue a letter asserting the "sanctity of the marriage covenant between one man and one woman to be a God-given relationship to be honored by marital fidelity." Supporters of the statement argued that the report's publicity had made it necessary to correct a public impression that the church condones adultery.

Following the vote, several hundred of the 2500 people attending the General Assembly meeting began a silent protest of the report's rejection. The protesters carried a wooden cross down the central aisle of the convention hall, hammered nails into it and then broke the silence by singing hymns.

Stewart said the annual meeting succeeded in establishing common ground for future meetings and discussion on sex issues. He pointed out that the Assembly Committee had also called for a church-wide study of the issues the report had discussed.

"We do not find common ground by continuing to stand on the backs of gays and lesbians," said church elder Sylvia Thorson-Smith, one of the authors of the report.

Rev. John J. Carey, chair of the panel that wrote the report, said that the Assembly Committee's recommendations "still encourage discussion of these painful and difficult issues."

Routine ordination

One of the most heated issues in recent discussions has been the ordination of openly gay and lesbian people. Debates over the

ordination of lesbians and gay men are currently raging within the Episcopal and United Methodist Churches.

Amid opposition from several Episcopalian officials, the Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C. ordained its first openly lesbian priest June 5. Washington's Bishop Ronald H. Haines defended his decision to ordain Elizabeth Carl by saying he believed that being gay "should not by itself be a bar to ordination in all cases."

"I am mindful that there are others in the Episcopal Church who believe it is not appropriate under any circumstances to ordain a person who maintains a lifestyle that entails sexual relations outside of marriage," said Haines. Nonetheless, he said, his diocese had the right to decide whether or not gay and lesbian candidates should be ordained.

Haines said that any reservations about ordaining a lesbian were outweighed by Carl's qualifications, religious devotion and her "lifelong and monogamous commitment" to another woman. He added that he believed that Carl does not intend to use the ministry as a public forum for gay and lesbian issues.

Carl's ordination precedes a resolution that will go before the U.S. Episcopal Church's General Assembly in August. The resolution states that individual dioceses may form their own policies concerning the ordination of lesbians and gay men.

Opponents of the resolution criticized both Haines' ordination of Carl and its timing, which comes just before the Episcopal General Assembly meeting.

Frances Antonucci, a spokesperson for Haines, said Haines was not trying to make a statement to the General Assembly by ordaining Carl. As evidence, she cited the fact that reporters were excluded from the ordination ceremony.

Antonucci added that Carl was made a deacon last year and that ordination six months later is routine.

'God loves you'

Unlike Carl, Rev. James Hawk of the United Methodist Church was not supported by his bishop when he came out as a gay minister.

"When I told the bishop I was gay, he said to me, 'So long as your silent, there will be no problems,'" said Hawk. "I thought to myself, why should I be silent about something so very good?"

Hawk came out prior to being assigned a church and was given the choice of taking a voluntary year-long leave (with benefits) or an involuntary leave (without benefits). He opted for the former. After his leave he returned to the bishop and requested a church assignment.

Instead, United Methodist clergy and laity from Western Pennsylvania met June 13 in Grove City and voted to "discontinue" Hawk as an ordained minister. According to Hawk, the United Methodist Church says it views gay men and lesbians as "people of value," but condemns gay and lesbian sexual activity.

"The church really doesn't love lesbian and gay persons," said Hawk. He also said that members of the church opposed to inclusion of gay men and lesbians "have aligned themselves with the KKK, the skinheads and the neo-Nazi movement."

"I've known from the start this was a losing battle," Hawk told *GCN*. "But I am hoping, no matter what the Church says, that people will see me and say, 'God loves you.'"

In August, the United Methodist Church will complete a draft study on "homosexuality." The NGLTF's Drake said he expects that at the United Methodists' 1992 conference, "Methodists will do an out-and-out battle over a national policy concerning ordination of gay men and lesbians."

Drake said that the volume of gay and lesbian religious rights cases has caused NGLTF to consider creating a religious support position in its 1992 budget.

"The religious element's view of homosexuality plays into every one of our political issues," said Drake. "We need any and all successes in neutralizing religious opposition or gaining support within churches."

—filed from Boston



ADRIANNA ALTY

'Night of the Witches'

BERLIN—More than 600 women participated in the annual Walpurgisnacht (Night of the Witches) demonstration here April 30. The action raised awareness of violence against women and illustrated the German feminist slogan "Together, women are strong." Women of all ages dressed as witches and carried noisemakers in order to draw as much attention as possible as they marched through the streets of Berlin.

Traditionally, the route passes through shopping streets, residential areas and the red light district and culminates in a huge women-only celebration. This year, the route included trendy cafe-filled Goltzstrasse and the downtown "Zoo" area, and ended at the Technical University. The marchers were escorted by several dozen police officers and four police wagons.

Although speakers focused on violence against women, a number of women also distributed information about Paragraph 218, the abortion code. The abortion issue will be reconsidered by the unified German government by the fall of 1992. Currently, the Federal Republic of Germany (West) has a very restrictive law, while abortion is free and easily available in the German Democratic Republic (East).

—Laura Pierce



Lesbian erotica book seized by U.S. Customs

Officials deem the work 'obscene'

By Wickie Stamps

BOSTON—More than 1000 copies of a book of lesbian erotica photography were seized by U.S. Customs June 4. Della Grace's *Love Bites* was arriving by sea from London to its U.S. distributor, Alyson Publications, but was stopped at Boston's port. According to a letter sent to Alyson, the U.S. Customs, Fines and Penalties Office has declared *Love Bites* "obscene."

The seizure is "a clear case of homophobia disguised as censorship," said Sasha Alyson, head of Alyson Publications. "Della Grace's work is powerful and arousing, yet few of the photos are really sexual," he said, adding, "They're much less explicit than the straight male pornography that's regularly imported and distributed."

"The real pornography," concluded Alyson, "is that while the government says there's no money to properly teach kids how to read a book, there's plenty of funding to tell adults what books we can have."

The U.S. attorney's office in Boston will consider the *Love Bites* case within two to three weeks. It will then go before a Federal District Court, which will determine the validity of the charges brought by Customs. If the book is found not to be obscene, it will be released. If it is found to be obscene, however, all of the copies will be destroyed,

according to Customs official Lisa Mitri.

Alyson Publications may either contest the court's finding or forfeit publishing the book. "If we contest the obscenity charges and loose, Customs will destroy the books," said Adrien Saks, a marketing assistant at Alyson. "Also, if they find the books obscene, that could leave us wide open for the court to then bring charges against Alyson Publications for trying to import obscene materials," he told *GCN*.

Saks added that although it would be easier for Alyson to forfeit the case, the books would definitely be destroyed in that instance. "We are making phone calls," said Saks, "and we are hoping that before the case comes down to the wire, we can resolve this situation."

Ironically, the introduction to *Love Bites* "anticipated" the seizure, according to Sasha Alyson. In her introduction, novelist Sarah Schulman writes that "the current anti-pornography laws and pervasive anti-sex moralism have been used to declare entire lives obscene." Schulman adds, "We are no longer looking at a separation of particular acts as forbidden, but now face a growing cultural acceptance that people's lives are pornographic."

The photos in *Love Bites* show lesbians in

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COMMUNITY VOICES

GCN EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

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All letters and "Speaking Out" contributions must be TYPED and DOUBLE-SPACED. Letters can be NO LONGER THAN TWO PAGES. "Speaking Out" contributions can be NO LONGER THAN FOUR PAGES and require a short (one to two sentence) biographical note about the author for inclusion at the end of the article.

Because GCN wishes to encourage dialogue and a diverse representation of perspectives on the letters pages, printing of "Speaking Out" contributions received from authors who have had other "Speaking Outs" appear in GCN recently may be postponed temporarily.

For editing purposes, it is helpful to be able to contact you easily -- please enclose your name, address, and daytime phone number with your letter or article. Thanks.

The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" contributions are those of the author and are not intended to represent the views of the GCN staff, Board or membership.

The law is one crucial arena where it is possible to stop homophobia some of the time and, occasionally, win new rights. During the last few years our community has won a series of important victories in the courts. These accomplishments include the successful challenge to a number of different state's sodomy statutes, the recognition of lesbian and gay families in child custody disputes, as well as the expansion of the ability to adopt children. Some jurisdictions now permit second parent adoptions for lesbian and gay parents, and increasingly, domestic partnerships are recognized in both the public and private sector.

But in order to keep defending our community and winning new rights, gay men and lesbians have to be in the courts, day in and day out. With NGRA—a major player in the legal arena—gone, other organizations in our community will try to pick up the slack. Our own organization, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, will respond as best we can to the increased requests for advice and representation. But all organizations fighting for lesbian and gay legal rights operate with few resources, and those, in many cases, are already stretched to the limit.

This is not a time to point fingers and raise accusations about why NGRA was forced to go out of business. It all comes down to the community losing faith in the law firm, and being unwilling to further support it financially. At the National Center for Lesbian Rights, we encourage the community to hold us to the highest standard of accountability. But as we bang on the courtroom doors demanding a place for lesbians and gay men, we ask for the community's support, even more, now that NGRA is gone.

Patti Roberts
Judi MacLean
San Francisco, Calif.

Congratulations

Dear GCN:

Because this paper has no vehicle by which to announce the celebration of marriages and commitment ceremonies, we would like to use this space to announce the following:

On May 18, 1991, Patricia A. Morey and Kimberly K. Burnworth, both of Jamaica Plain, were married under the care of the Beacon Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, in a traditional Quaker Meeting for Worship for the Purpose of Marriage. The Meeting for Worship was held at the African Meeting House on Beacon Hill and the reception was held at the Appalachian Mountain Club, also on Beacon Hill. The couple took the name Walker as the common family name. Approximately 150 of their friends and family attended, many of whom followed the couple's horse-drawn carriage to the Public Gardens for picture taking before the reception. The couple honeymooned in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.

We encourage other couples who have celebrated their commitments to share this news with our community in this forum and we celebrate and thank those who have already done so.

In hope and joy,
Kimberly K. Burnworth-Walker
Patricia A. Morey-Walker
Jamaica Plain, MA.

Specific references

Dear GCN:

I write in response to Terry Gordon Colbert's comments on the use of generic terms (e.g., homosexual) vs. specific terms (e.g., lesbian, gay man) to refer to people in our community. I am an advocate of using a generic term only when referring to both sexes, and always using a specific reference for one sex. The worst and most confusing practice is to use a generic terms to sometimes stand in for both sexes, and at other times to use the same term to represent only gay men. The words gay and homosexual are currently used in just such an ambiguous way. My arguments against this usage are based on research I'll describe below.

There are dozens of psycholinguistic and sociological studies showing that other forms of "masculine generic" language can cause trouble. For example, some of my own studies demonstrate that the generic use of "he" can lead to confused interpretations and several accompanying problems—lowered career aspirations for women and possible higher convictions rates in court cases against women, to mention just two.

Similar issues arise in the use of the masculine generic terms "gay" and "homosexual," though I know of only one set of studies directly addressing the issue. In

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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SAFER SEX AND DRUG USE GUIDELINES

GCN offers these guidelines for all of us who are making decisions about sex and drug use in the midst of the AIDS epidemic.

HIV is a virus widely thought to be a cause of AIDS. The highest concentrations of HIV are found in blood and semen. So it's important to avoid any way in which HIV-infected blood or semen can get from one person's body into another person's bloodstream.

- Fucking (anal and vaginal) without a condom and sharing needles account for almost all the documented cases of HIV transmission.
- Oral sex without a condom or dental dam accounts for a very few documented cases of HIV transmission.
- Other ways of transmitting HIV that have not been documented but which could be theoretically risky include: fisting, finger fucking, rimming, deep kissing, sharing uncleaned dildos. The theory here is that any way HIV-infected bodily fluids get from one person into another involves risk. For example, HIV could be transmitted if a person with a cut on their hand fistfucked their partner and caused bleeding in their rectum or vagina.

HOW TO PLAY SAFER

Only you can decide what risks you are willing to take. Some people use safer sex practices with all their partners. Other people make decisions about the risks they are willing to take based on their own and their partners' sexual and drug use history and/or HIV status. People also make decisions based on how comfortable they feel negotiating safer sex in any particular situation. If you and your partner have not talked about past practices and/or HIV status, don't make assumptions. (For example, many lesbians have had unprotected intercourse with a man in the last ten years.)

- Use a condom when fucking. On the condoms, use water-based lubricants like KY. Oil-based lubricants like Crisco, Vaseline, and baby oil may make condoms break.
- Use a condom when sucking dick if your partner is going to come in your mouth. If HIV-infected cum or pre-cum gets in your mouth, it may get in your bloodstream through cuts in your gums or sores in your mouth.
- Use dental dams (latex squares) when going down on a woman if she is having her period or has a vaginal infection. Menstrual blood and secretions from vaginal infections have more HIV than healthy vaginal secretions or urine. No information has been gathered about the concentration of HIV in "female ejaculate."
- Use latex gloves for fisting or finger-fucking if you have any sores or cuts on your hands.
- Keep semen and blood (including menstrual blood and blood drawn from piercing, cutting or shaving) out of your vagina, anus, mouth, or breaks in your skin.
- If you share dildos, vibrators or other sex toys, use a new condom each time, or clean toys with hydrogen peroxide or soap and water.
- Alternative insemination may put you at risk. Discuss this risk with potential donors or sperm banks.
- Massage, hugging, dirty talk, role-playing, masturbation (solo, with a partner, in a group) and other activities that don't let blood or semen into your bloodstream are safe.
- Alcohol, poppers or other drugs may lower your ability to make good decisions. Many people have reported that they have been unable to maintain safer sex practices after getting high.
- Good nutrition, lots of rest, exercise and nonabuse of alcohol and other drugs may help you fight all illnesses, including AIDS.

INTRAVENOUS DRUG USE

- Don't share works (needles, syringes, droppers, spoons, cottons or cookers)!
- If you must share or re-use works, clean them before and after each injection as follows: dip needle and works into bleach, draw up and release three times, dip needle and works into fresh water, draw up and release three times. In an emergency, rubbing alcohol or vodka can be used instead of bleach. Or you can boil works that aren't plastic in water for at least 15 minutes. (Use a fresh solution each time you clean your works.)

RESOURCE NUMBERS

National AIDS Hotline: 1 (800) 342-7514
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) Boston: 1 (800) 235-2331
Latino AIDS Hotline (bilingual), Boston: (617) 262-7248
AIDS Action Committee (AAC) IV Drug Use Taskforce, Boston: (617) 437-4200
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), New York: (212) 807-6655
National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC), Washington, D.C.: (202) 544-1076
Women's AIDS Network, San Francisco: (415) 864-4376

Others perished

[GCN received a copy of this letter sent to Ruth B. Fein, of the New England Holocaust Memorial Committee]

Dear Ms. Fein:

It is welcome news indeed that a New England holocaust memorial will soon be built in Boston. I was very interested in the exhibit, now at South Station, of finalists in the design competition. I was less happy to realize that not one proposal mentions any of the non-Jewish groups systematically persecuted by the Nazis.

The case of the Jews is unique, in that an entire people was targeted with liquidation. But hundreds of thousands of other individuals perished in the Nazi concentration camps. They were political prisoners, gypsies, homosexuals (men almost exclusively) Jehovah's Witnesses, criminals, the mentally ill, and others defined by Nazi ideology as degenerate or anti-social. The persecution and attempted eradication of these groups was not merely incidental to the "Final Solution." It was an integral part of the Nazi scheme to "purify" the Aryan race in preparation for millennium of world domination.

Is it not ironic that the New England Holocaust Memorial—this "Monument to Memory"—should forget the multitudes of others who perished with the Jews? Because these others were less numerous, less articulate, or because they were criminalized by an evil regime, are their lives and their deaths less worthy of memorial? Are there not valuable lessons about the methods of totalitarianism to be learned from the fate of these others?

Most designs for the Memorial now in the final round would reinforce the widely held misapprehension that the Holocaust was motivated by anti-Semitism alone. I hope that it is not too late in the process of selecting and refining the design to incorporate a more inclusive view of the victims of Nazism. The establishment of the New England Holocaust Memorial is a rare opportunity to offer to the broadest public a more complete understanding of this darkest hour of modern history.

Sincerely yours,
Fenwick Smith
Jamaica Plain, Mass.

NGRA closing a loss

Dear GCN:

National Gay Rights Advocates (NGRA), a public interest law firm nationally recognized for its work in AIDS discrimination, employment rights and Constitutional law, has closed its doors. Coming at a time when lesbians and gay men need more legal representation, rather than less, the demise of this California-based law firm is a real loss.

Who says transsexuals can't be lesbians?

By Davina Anne Gabriel

Lofofora Contreras provides an exceptionally accurate and eminently commendable refutation of what is probably the most frequently cited, but completely erroneous and highly disingenuous justification employed by transphobic lesbians for practicing discrimination against transsexual lesbians ("To move forward, we need to move together," *GCN*, Vol. 18, No. 38). However, it was with considerable dismay that I went on to read in her same editorial her very uniformed contention that I do not exist. Ms. Contreras' analysis of the "male privilege" argument is exactly precise in every regard, and effectively dismantles the specious assumptions underlying it, but her declaration that transsexuals can not also be lesbians is entirely inaccurate and woefully short-sighted.

Contrary to Ms. Contreras' assessment, it is neither rare nor inappropriate for a transsexual to desire to participate in a lesbian conference. Like thousands of others around the world, I consider myself to be both a transsexual and a lesbian, and I personally know several other individuals who do so as well. In fact, some researchers estimate that approximately one half of all male-to-female transsexuals consider themselves to be lesbians. Furthermore, while my lesbianism is a very central aspect of my identity, my transsexuality is at best a merely peripheral aspect of my identity. Therefore, it is as a lesbian, and not as a transsexual, that I primarily identify.

I have been a woman both anatomically and legally for twelve years; I live and function in society every minute of my life as a woman; I am affected by all of the same issues and share all of the same values, goals and concerns as do other women; I have experienced the same discrimination, intimidation, harassment and violence as other women, and my lover is a genetic woman who identifies herself as a lesbian. Therefore, I am most certainly also a lesbian, regardless of the fact that I may have been born into a male body; and it is entirely improper for Ms. Contreras to declare that it

is inappropriate for me to participate in a lesbian conference.

The extended debate by National Lesbian Conference organizers regarding male-to-female transsexuals referred to by M.P. Schildmeyer ("Lesbian Conference planners meet in Atlanta," *GCN*, Vol 18. No. 16), and which Ms. Contreras responds to, was probably the result of an attempt which I initiated over a year ago to have the NLC pass a resolution condemning discrimination against transsexual lesbians within the lesbian community. My attempt to secure passage of this resolution came as a result of numerous instances of discrimination and hostility directed toward me by a segment of the Kansas City lesbian community because I am a transsexual, as well as being a lesbian.

While I was unsuccessful in obtaining passage of that resolution, I am pleased to be informed that my efforts have at least resulted in extended discussion regarding the very controversial issue of transsexual lesbians, and may have at least raised the consciousness of some lesbians regarding this issue.

I was unable to attend the National Lesbian Conference in Atlanta in April 1991, but I did attend the regional planning meeting held here in Kansas City in 1990, and I certainly did not consider myself to be "knocking on the wrong door." In fact, as I considered it perfectly appropriate that I attend that planning meeting, I did not ask anyone for permission to attend, and I even served on the host committee that organized that planning meeting. And I most certainly would not have asked for permission to attend the conference in Atlanta had I been able to do so.

Ms. Contreras seems to confuse sexual identity with sexual preference, which are two separate components of sexuality. Transsexuality is a gender identity condition and is entirely separate from sexual preference. And while she does not say so explicitly, her contention that transsexuals are a "third sex," and that they are always attracted to men seems to equate transsexuality with "berdache" tradition in

some Native American cultures. But as Walter L. Williams pointed out in the definitive work on the "berdache" tradition, *The Spirit and the Flesh*, while transsexuality is indeed very similar to the "berdache" tradition, there are also very notable differences between the two conditions. Therefore, transsexuals should not be expected to be exactly like "berdache" in every regard. It is utterly amazing to me that someone in Ms. Contreras' position within the transsexual community could espouse such an uninformed and limited viewpoint.

Transsexuals, like non-transsexuals, come in all varieties of sexual preference—from exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual, and every gradation in between. Ms. Contreras' contention that all male-to-female transsexuals are sexually attracted only to men, or that they should be, is not only inaccurate and uninformed, but expresses the same kind of myopic heterosexist assumptions which she so effectively refutes in regard to the "male privilege" argument.

So, while Ms. Contreras has effectively dismantled one of the false justifications for the continuing oppression of transsexual lesbians by other lesbians, she has also done transsexual lesbians a very grave disservice by providing their oppressors with yet another wholly inaccurate justification for continuing that same oppression.

Davina Anne Gabriel is a 37-year-old post-operative transsexual lesbian, who is very politically active in Kansas City's gay and lesbian community. She is the chairperson of the Visibility/Direct Action Committee of the Human Rights Project, a local political action group working to secure the rights of gay men, lesbians, transsexuals and transvestites. She is also one of the founding members of the local chapter of Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian and Gay Concerns, and a member of the Gay and Lesbian Awareness committee of Kansas City.

a series of three studies, reported in the *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, I explored the contribution of the media's language practices in describing AIDS risk to the public perception that AIDS is punishment for being "gay."

In Study 1, I found that in the *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Times Magazine* and *Newsweek Magazine* from 1983 to 1985, the majority of references to homosexuality in the context of AIDS involved the generic terms "gay" and "homosexual" rather than specifying that it was gay men being discussed. It's not clear whether lesbians were simply being left out, in line with a long tradition of ignoring women in general, or rather that there was deliberate obfuscation occurring. I suspect it's more often the former. *Newsweek*, for example, once stated that every sexually active person should use a condom. Where, for crying out loud, would they suggest that lesbians put it?!

The second study documented college students' pronounced overestimation of lesbian risk of contracting AIDS sexually. This portion of research has been replicated from one end of the country to the other (CA, KY, ME, PA), and as recently as 1991. The third study suggested a causal link between language practices (Study 1) and lesbian risk exaggeration (Study 2). Use of a specific term (homosexual men) rather than a generic one (homosexuals), in a passage describing to the student's various "risky behaviors," caused student's estimates for the riskiness of lesbian sex to drop significantly. Once the respondents realized that it was certain sexual *behaviors*, not homosexuality per se, that put one at risk, it dawned on them that lesbian sex had to be assessed separately from gay male sex.

I advocate clarity of expression *not* for the purpose of dividing the gay men's and lesbian communities, asserting lesbian superiority, or causing anyone to forget lesbian risk. Three reasons I do see for specifying sex when discussing AIDS risk are: simple accuracy; it takes the wind out of the argument that AIDS is God's punishment for homosexuals (the logical extension being, of course, that lesbians are God's chosen people, an argument that few bigots are willing to stand behind); and it helps focus people on the fact that it's behaviors that are risky, not group memberships (students' main reason for assessing lesbian risk as high has been "because they are homosexual.")

Clear communication, I conclude, is best served by employing specific terms when referring to one sex (lesbians, gay men) and by restricting generic terms to strictly generic usage. I'd even go a bit further—because the terms "gay" and homosexual *could* be interpreted as referring to men only, it's better to say "gay women and men" or "homosexual men and women" when we want to discuss both sexes.

Sincerely,
Mykol C. Hamilton, PhD
Danville, Ky.

Marriage compromise

Dear *GCN*:

Regarding the matter of publishing gay/lesbian wedding announcements, it should be obvious by now that gay or lesbian couples have only to write a letter to the editor to have their ceremonies mentioned. Which, of course, is *not* adequate, or satisfactory for anyone concerned.

Given that *any* weekly paper does not have the room to publish a photograph and several paragraphs, as the daily newspapers do. However, we run obituaries, because we think it is important to remember our dead. It is, and it is *also* important to honor the living, to celebrate all the aspects of our lives.

Suggested: a compromise. What about a line item, possibly in the Classifieds, which would simply read:

MARRIED/Aaron Adams and Zane Zelazny, June 6, 1991, in Boston, MA.

This would fulfill the need to publicly identify ourselves and the relationships we treasure, but would not be a burden on the paper. This format would also serve for Births, which I hope to see many more of as well.

Jan R. Fielding
Brighton, Mass.

Poor medical care

Dear *GCN*:

I wrote a letter about some of the poor conditions inside this prison of San Quentin for gays who are disabled and handicapped and for other inmates who are gay. I told you how this prison discriminates towards gays who are begging to get gay religious services

in this prison. And some like myself are wanting to be housed with another gay inmate. I also told you that we suffer from pain for lack of medical treatment, due to the improper care and lack of treatment.

Doctors here do very little for a disabled inmate, and they will not prescribe any type of heavy medication to an inmate with internal pain. I should know, I am suffering in pain and so are other inmates who are disabled and who need surgery. This includes regular inmates who need surgery as well!!

We cannot get any X-rays done in here, 'cause the equipment is broken down. And the dumb doctors think there is nothing wrong with us that we didn't have wrong with us already. They even do improper diagnoses to a lot of the inmates and make us all suffer with pain.

This includes me for instance and the flu that I had, not to mention of course the pain in my bad left leg. Doctors gave me no good medication for the pain and my leg locked up on me and I begged the doctor to give me a pain shot 'cause I fell off the top bunk of my bed trying to roll over off my stomach. Then my back and my head hit the floor. I have a civil suit pending in Federal Court.

I am indigent and I cannot afford any kind of legal defense help. But I did make the Court aware of this. And so far I am not getting anywhere. I am mentally ill also and have a poor education as well. I have a grade level of a 5.3 average, and an I.Q. of 57. I am typing this letter with two fingers. I try real hard to do the best I can do. I have written the Governor in Sacramento, California and I have written letters to Senator Alan Cranston and Legislative Branch State Calif. Assembly John Burton. I pray that all three of these men will help improve the medical conditions for the handicapped and disabled and mentally ill prisoners in the state of Calif.

Meanwhile I and other handicapped and disabled prisoners are trying to do anything we can by letters. And other means as well. I pray the courts will hear our cries. So we can all get the proper treatment and medication that we all need.

I am very slow when it comes to using a typewriter and my vocabulary is very poor. I will try to hope and keep the faith some how. But the way things have been going I don't expect much to happen at all!! Well thank you for at least listening to me and my problems a few of them anyway. I just wish I

could either get surgery or at least proper pain medication. Me and other prisoners who are disabled of course. And those who really need help and treatment.

Respectfully, your truly
Richard C. Engler
#E-67076
P.O. Box E-67076
Tamal, CA 94974

Help my love continue

Dear *GCN*:

I'm writing in hope, the most desperate hope that you can help me.

I'm an inmate in the Alabama Department of Corrections; at Fountain Correctional Center. A southern bible belt state that's predominately biased against gays and gay rights—regardless of place of residence, employment status or place in the community.

I'm a bisexual as of 1986. In July 1986 I met a homosexual who has been gay his entire life. My original intention and desire was to protect him from the criminal acts that stronger more dominant inmates inflict on weaker and gay inmates. Never did I have an idea that a relationship would develop. An emotional bond, friendship and love grew between us to an enormous depth for the next five years.

Then came a catastrophic event. Living in a penal system that promotes racial tension and dominance of the weak by the strong, the administration becomes infuriated to see the weak and the gay protected. To see any two inmates (especially gay) living in harmony and happiness further infuriates this same administration. So seeing us beating the odds the administration separated us. Not due to any disciplinary actions or violations. We were never caught in violation of administrative rules. Nor was our relationship a security risk. Only because here was a case of two inmates able to withstand any and all attempts by other inmates and the administration to put our happy and loving relationship asunder. My friend and lover Travis O'Neal Thrower was transferred by the administration from here at Fountain Correctional Center to Limestone Correctional Facility for the sole purpose of separating us. Upon my request to transfer with Travis to Limestone I received this answer, "You will not be transferred to Limestone because inmate Travis Thrower, an admitted homosexual and

close friend of yours, is being transferred to Limestone."

Everything aforesaid is background on the events that bring me to seek your help. Inmates in the Alabama Department of Corrections are not allowed to correspond prison to prison. Mail is also censored coming in, so mailing a letter home and having it forwarded to Travis won't work.

Travis was my first experience with love, of caring for another person. I want to convey my love and pain. To inform Travis that even though we are separated by a great distance, my feelings for him are stronger than ever. I think this can be best conveyed by the following:

T.O.T
I called your name the other day, just before you went away.
but when I turned to see, I was by myself and no sight of you.
Now what am I supposed to think? What shall I do alone and without you?
Can we start again? If only it's pretend. Surely you'll know by everything I show that I truly do need/love you.
First time around we had a rough start. Over time we drifted apart, became lonely, lost our place in each other's heart. Eventually we came together hoping never to part.
Fate dealt an unfair hand, sending you to a different far away land. Over the miles with lessening smiles, we thought of commitment not contentment. Forever to care, if not to share our bonds of oneness. Now? What? Why?
Words we don't want to hear might truly squeeze a tear.
Think not that we won't continue to try.
Dozier E. Lee Jr 134436
Fountain 38
Atmore, AL 36503

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Reception

Continued from page 1
an organization to picket someone they invited as a guest."

Cronin and other members of Lesbians and Gay Men Against Weld disagreed with LaFontaine's assessment of the protest. Cronin said that he participated in the demonstration, but that it was principally organized by members of the Gay and Lesbian Labor Activist Network (GALLAN), ACT UP, Queer Nation and individual activists.

Cronin said that while he thinks the Alliance does important work and he is "proud to be a board member," he could not partake in an event that he viewed as honoring Weld. "I disagree that Weld has done a lot for gay rights," Cronin told GCN. "He's only paid lip service to us, and his cuts have been far more damaging to our community than the benefit we receive from his few gay appointments."

"Only people like-minded to Weld are going to be brought to the [administration's] decision-making table, and that doesn't speak for whole segments of the lesbian and gay community," said Cronin, adding, "If you're male, white, affluent and well-educated, and happen to be gay and that's all you care about, then this arrangement is okay, you'll be accepted into 'the fold.' But to me that doesn't represent gay rights."

Honoring Weld?

Don Gorton, chair of the Alliance, said that although he supports Cronin's right to protest Weld and the reception, he disagrees with the demonstrators' characterization of the event. "They said that we were honoring Weld, and in fact this wasn't true," Gorton told GCN. "Ironically, the reality is that Weld was honoring us. His attendance at the reception was to acknowledge gay and lesbian political achievement, to express his thanks for our key political endorsement in 1990 and to salute us during gay and lesbian pride month," he said.

Gorton also said that he was troubled that the protesters questioned the Alliance's working relationship with the Weld administration. "They attempted to devalue an important method of political action: lobbying the executive branch," said Gorton, adding, "I was distressed that there was an effort to chill dialogue between the Alliance and the administration. Lobbying is a crucial tool for securing lesbian and gay civil rights."

Rich Tafel, president of the Log Cabin Federation, a gay Republican group, said he disagreed with both the protesters' arguments and tactics. He said he didn't attend the reception because "I thought it was ridiculous for a gay organization to invite the governor and then have a board member plan a zap." He told GCN that "I didn't want to see the governor set up for a trap. It's not a good thing for the governor to have to be embarrassed like that."

"I think it's a little sick to have a motto like 'Gay rights is not enough,'" continued Tafel. "If a gay organization's primary purpose is to achieve gay rights, that's what they should do." He added, "Is there nothing [Weld] can do to please these people? They don't want him to succeed. He's done a lot of good things for gay rights, so now they're switching their political agenda to include everything else."

'Challenge gay conservatives'

The protesters and some members of the Alliance say that the demonstration was a necessary demand for political accountability.

"Straight people are not asked to have just one political group representing them, and it's crazy to suggest that one group can speak for all gay people," said protest organizer Kay Diaz. "We are concerned that with today's stratification of wealth, gay people who are leftist and progressive are being left with fewer economic resources with which to form large gay political organizations and have access to the straight elites," she said.

Diaz asserted that the protesters were demanding that the people hosting and attending the reception remember the full diversity of the lesbian and gay community they were claiming to represent. "We have a moral authority that straight progressives don't have to challenge gay conservatives," said Diaz, adding, "We have to challenge them to see the contradictions in their quest for gay rights if they are willing to see other rights, including economic rights, be trampled on."

Rosemary Dunn Dalton, who is a member of both the Alliance's board and Weld's transition team, said the reception, the protest and Weld's decision not to attend the event brought to light some highly important

and disturbing issues. Dunn Dalton told GCN that she believes the protesters "were absolutely justified in demonstrating." She added, however, that she is "very angry" about how some politicians handled the situation.

"The decisions reached by various political organizations, the governor, and Mike Duffy all were made without one single lesbian voice," she said. "It proves that politics continues to be a white male club."

Dunn Dalton also said that she was very disappointed with Weld's actions since the event. "I've placed calls to his office since the reception and I've gotten the run-around," she explained. "I have been the only lesbian voice outspoken in support of the governor, and I have done so at great risk," said Dunn Dalton. "If I don't get a response now, at least I know where we stand."

Dunn Dalton asserted, "My colleagues need to analyze what the hell is happening" with Weld. "We need to know if Weld is going to disenfranchise the gay community now that he thinks he is getting the economy back on its feet," she said.

"We were an important vote, but we have to remember that we're completely dispensable to the straight community," Dunn Dalton concluded. "If that's where we're at now, we need to develop a new political strategy." □

Love Bites

Continued from page 3

campy clothes hanging out, clubbing and clowning around. "Clubbers," one of the book's half dozen sections, features lesbians partying in various locales such as Club Uranus in San Francisco and London's Zombies. Other sections, such as "Permission to Play" and "Ruff Sex," contain what Schulman refers to as "S&M scenes with tough-looking Butches and slutty Femmes." Most erotic photos are shot in bathrooms, alleys, or, in Schulman's words, "other secret places where rough sex is hidden and contained."

Love Bites previewed in early June at the American Booksellers Convention in New York where it was well received. The book is the first lesbian erotica work that has been published by Gay Men's Press Publishers in London.

The photographer, Grace, is an American-born artist who currently resides in London. Her work has been exhibited throughout the United Kingdom, and was recently shown at a contemporary exhibition in Los Angeles called "All the Obvious." Grace's work has also appeared in the U.S. lesbian erotica magazine *On Our Backs* and various publications in Britain and Germany. Grace's work will be showcased in a compilation of lesbian photography that will be published by Pandora Press this summer.

Last fall, Alyson Publications faced a similar situation when an Illinois prison refused to allow a prisoner to receive a book that was, according to Sasha Alyson, "explicit but non-pornographic gay literature." The publisher won that case. □

ACT UP

Continued from page 1

the public and legal pressure by saying that the contested policy was only a draft, and that the official policy would not include the discriminatory clause. Both Bing and Kawadler accused the insurance carrier of trying to cover up its prejudices.

"Lloyds never gave any sign that the policy was only a draft," said Kawadler. "They're trying now to say its issuance was a mistake," he added, "but they marketed it and sold it for seven months after ACT UP first demanded its withdrawal. It was no mistake."

—filed from Boston

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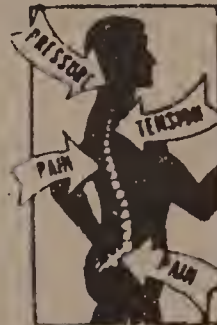
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Boston Pride '91

this year's Pride celebration in Boston was a hot, sweaty and sexy affair. A crowd of queers estimated at 90,000 walked, marched, wheeled and gamboled its way from City Hall to a festival held on Boston Common, June 8. If this was your first Pride, you undoubtedly got quite a charge from being surrounded by so many of your own people. But even if you are a veteran of many Pride Days, you probably still relished being in the middle of masses and masses of proud gay, lesbian, and bisexual people.

Half the fun was being out to and supportive of each other. A biker dyke from Moving Violations sprayed people from a gallon jug of cool water to help cut down on the heat. Men publicly kissed and hugged each other. The Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays contingent got waves of applause and at least one family walked together with a sign saying "Proud Parents of a Bisexual Son."

The other half of the fun, of course, was flaunting it to the rest of the world. Some people in the crowd stripped off shirts, or flashed sequins and shocked the passersby. A full tour bus joined the march for a couple of blocks, guaranteeing that some people's vacation slides would make for interesting living-room conversation. The Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth group chanted anti-homophobia slogans that carried for blocks, guaranteeing that straight folks who happened upon the parade by accident got the message.

These are just a few of the 90,000 stories from Boston's 21st annual Lesbian and Gay Pride celebration. The accompanying photographic images tell a few more.

—Steve Karpf



SUSAN FLEISCHMANN



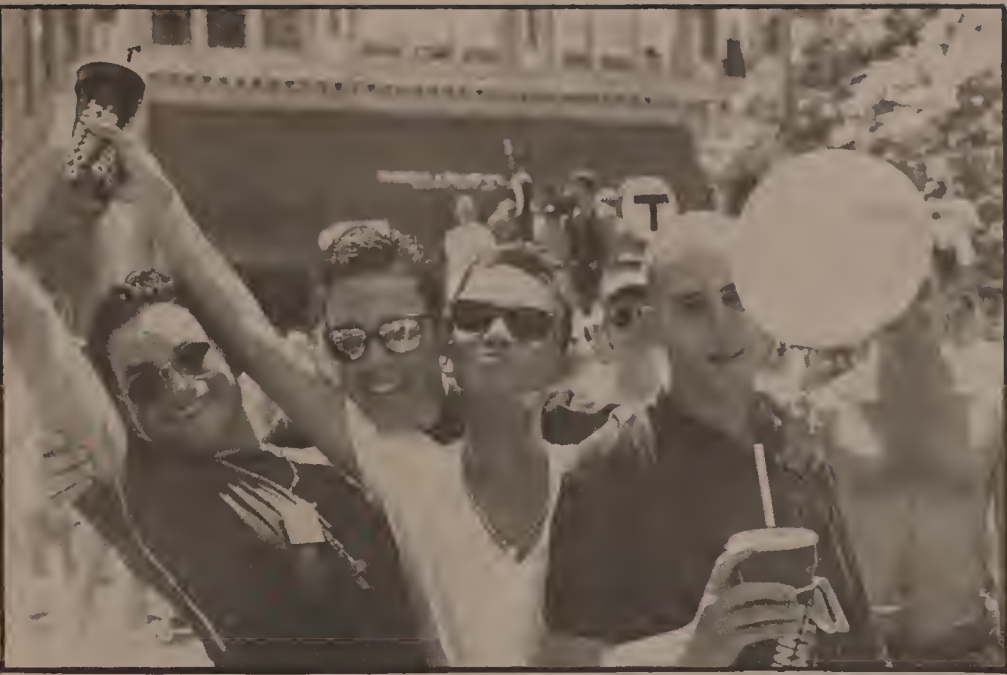
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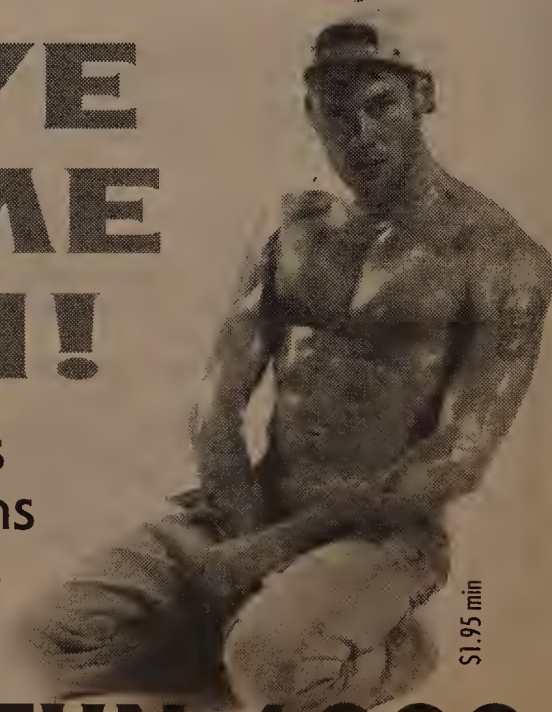
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JAVA

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I suppose you know—I have (what's becoming) an unmanageable crush on you. (49)

SLIMEHEAD

I love you, beautiful. ...thank you (for everything). You know? You are biased, but I like you that way.

Would your personal ideal heroine be someone with Emma G's ferocity, Audre Lorde's poetic nature, Madonna's sense of style and Sandra's wit? Okay, so I'm not that girl, but let's write about her! Ready to hear from you. GCN Box 222. (46)

I'm looking for men to date, have fun with, and maybe even settle down with, but along the way I'll enjoy the 1, 2, and 3 nighters that come my way. I like men of all designs, although short, stocky, balding ones raise my pole especially high. I'm 26, 6'2", 235lbs, of Italian decent, covered with a full coat of body hair and a full, bushy stache. I've got multiple piercings, and a tattoo. I'm into a variety of sexual activities and don't intend to limit myself, but do rather especially enjoy active anal play (inc. FF), kissing, snuggling and cuddling do it for me also! While I'm happy in a top role, compromises can be made, especially for the right people. Ask I might be interested. All letters will be responded to. Send a photo and your letter to: GCN Box 111

I need a man. Box R46. (47)

MAYBE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT...

That's okay, because most of the time it's not what, but who. And you know, it could just be me. I am a WL, 27. I would call myself a filmmaker if I'd made a film more recently than 3 years ago. I moved to Boston in January and am discovering for the first time the many trials and joys of waitressing. I am being serious (lest someone think I am making a classist joke). Let's see... If you don't mind having sex 4 or 5 times a day (now I am joking), if you believe that people don't think enough before they open their mouths (or write personal ads, Hal); if you still love Sandy Bernhard, most Gemini's, and most music, if you have an open mind and absolutely, positively have a sense of humor—write to me and we'll go out for a drink. GCN Box AC4 (49)

VOYAGE WEST

Looking for Mr. Lott. Please call John at 834-5921. (46)

Hi, L, let's try to remember to appreciate. (46)

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- ☐ APARTMENTS
- ☐ SUMMER RENTALS
- ☐ MASSAGE
- ☐ FOR SALE
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(40)

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(45)

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(46)

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PRISONERS SEEKING FRIENDS

For desperate act of conservation, I'm jailed. I love earth and need a good friend. Will please you anyway I can. I'm a GM, into Greenpeace. Greg T. Anderson, 30585, Hospltal Dr. N.23, Orofino, ID 83544.

Itallan who loves to write letters and recelve them hopes to hear from some of my gay brothers and sisters soon. Albert Citro, 90T5183, Box 999, Coxsackie, NY 12051-0999.

Beautiful Black homosexual would like to hear from BM who live in the free world. (Sorry, I'm not allowed to write to other prisoners.) I'm femme, my nickname is "La Valerie Ann"! Lawrence Raibon, 33325-004, Box 30000, Anthony, New Mexico 88021

GM to be released 3/92 seeks friendship/relationship with the rlight person. Seeking sincerlty & romance. Charles Fitzgerald, 114885, Rt. 1, Box 207-C C4-217, Lawrenceville VA 23868

Amercian Indian bisexual looking for penpals. I like rock n roll, country music, football. I love cats. Rodney George, Box 1900 N-38227, Canton IL 61520.

GM seeking penpals to help me through this troubled time. I only seek friendship. I'm sincere, with caring heart & open mind. Dennis Sutphin, 156032, Box 1000, Craigsville VA 24430.

BM seeks a gay relationship with someone gentle, intelligent, out-spoken. Race doesn't matter, heart does. I love writing poems. Patrick Jones, 093860, Box 747, Starke FL 32091.

I'm from the Virgin Islands and seeking male/female, gay/bisexual persons for correspondence & friendship. Roy Sylvester Parrott, 36262-118, 3901 Klein Blvd, Lompoc CA 93436.

I'm down & out, and would love penpals to write to. I'm a white/Indian queen with only 11 months more until my release. I have no one on the streets. B.P. Archuleta, D-98421, Box 8101, San Luis Obispo CA 93409.

GM, short-timer, paroling to Austln, TX, seeks special someone to share my secrets with. I'm the outdoors type, photos a must . Arnold Clopton, 510966, Rt. 2, Box 4400, Gatesville TX 76597.

I'm a bisexual male seeking a gay male to correspond with. I have one year left in prison. I'm looking for a friend. Brandon E, McCormlck, E18037-RB211, Box 705, Soledad CA 93960.

I'm looking for a new friend to write to from time to time. I like movies, cooking, music, and will write anyone who has a lot of understanding about life. Sidney A. Domangue, 85461, Camp H, Unit 1, C Dorm, Louisiana State Prison, Angola LA 70712.

Artistic GM seeking she-males, TVs for romance & correspondence. I'm very understanding--perhaps we can discover something nlce. Jerry Hildum 05748-051, Box 1700, Black Canyon Stage 1, Phoenix AZ 85027.

GM looking for a little sunshine in a lonely cell. I'm fem, looking for tht special someone (sorry, can't write prisoners). Write Gene "Linda" Osterhout, 068049, Box 221/R-24 20-0264, Raiford FL 32083.

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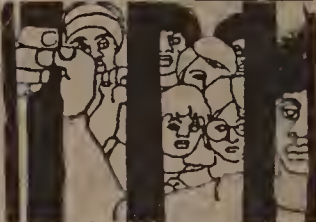
To all females: I'm a dominant or butch seeking new friends. My interests are traveling and women. I would love to meet you. Write Christi Vinson, #78, 161653, Box 8540, Pembroke Pine FL 33024.

I'm a female dominant looking for a fem iady who is serious about a relationship. I'm a Virgo, will be getting out in August. Write Pattie Maynard 151657, Mickens Cottage FHU, Box 7, Lowell FL 32663.

Stop! This is the one you're looking for! I'm a sensual transvestite, the girl of your dreams. Can we share fantasies & love through the postal system? Diane Johnson, 174303, Box 1000, Craigsville VA 24430.

I like living life to the fullest, enjoy camping, taking long drives and waiks, reading and drawing. All letters will be answered. Write Clifford P. Gaines, B08571, 100 Hillcrest Rd, E. Moline IL 61244.

GM looking for friendship, possible relationship. No head games, must be understanding, open-minded. Jimmy Ward 901377, 1500 U. U.S. 40, Greencastle IN 46135.



GM seeking friend, or lovable companion. I love the outdoors, country music, fishing. Roy M. Hudlin, 884557, Drm A-3-N, Box 473, Westville IN 46391.

I am a prisoner without family or friends. I will correspond with anyone who cares to write to me. Derrick Hancock, A141-533, Box 1368, Mansfield OH 44901.

I like reading, dancing, outdoors, and honesty. I need someone to help me flnd a good job & place to stay when I get out, until I get on my feet. Thank you. Raymond Hagood, 98712-CBB, LA State Prison, Angola LA 70712.

I'm looking for companionship through correspondence with men or women. Thanks. Michael James Harden, DC 289808, MB H-44, 3876 Evans Rd-Box 50, Polk City FL 33868.

Warm, emotlonal GM seeks correspondence. Very lonely, in much need of a friend. Mark E. Holmes, A483075-D541B, 3950 Tiger Bay Rd, Daytona Beach, FL 32124.

Talented GM, a tad fem, who loves to cook, see movies, or just curl up on the sofa with that special someone. (Sorry, can't write to prisoners.) I'll be released soon & must start over. Write C. Hirschmann, 914690, Putnam CI, Box 279, Mail 34, E. Palatka FL 32131.

I would like to meet a friend who'd like a corresponding relationship with someone behind bars who would be sincere & passionate. My code name is Cindy. Write Craig Reddix, 73165, Unit 22, Parchman MS 38738.

I'm looking for a sincere companion. All letters answered, would like a photo. I play both roles, but would like a man. Write Ed A. Rohn, 804037, Box B, Anamosa IA 52205.

CALENDAR

Boston ♦ Moving Violations Motor Club hosts its 6th annual benefit run, a fundraiser for the Mass. Coalition of Battered Women's Service Groups. MVMC is a forum for women motorcyclists. To sponsor a rider or for info: 524-8355.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged! Please specify if event is or is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings. All listings must be typed. Please note that listings are printed only as space allows; we regret that we cannot print every submission. No phone calls, please! Phone numbers listed are in the 617 area code, and non-major cities are in Massachusetts, unless otherwise noted.

15 SATURDAY

Boston ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club 7th Annual Ride to Provincetown. 128 miles. Info: Lisa 625-2689.

Boston ♦ Lesbian Coming-Out Group Walks Freedom Trail and Picnics. DOB. Info: Laura (508) 376-1983.

Boston ♦ Moving Violations Motor Club hosts its 6th annual benefit run, a fundraiser for the Mass. Coalition of Battered Women's Service Groups. MVMC is a forum for women motorcyclists. To sponsor a rider or for info: 524-8355.

Boston ♦ "Once Upon Our Time": Multicultural Story Hour for Children (3-8) of G/L Parents and Friends. Third Saturday each month. J.P. Library, 12 Sedgwick St. 10 to 11:15 a.m. Limited space. Sign up: Marian or Jenifer 267-0900.

Hennicker, NH ♦ New Hampshire Pride Day Celebration. 10 a.m. Kate Clinton, Teresa Trull, Romanovsky and Phillips, Boston Gay Men's Chorus; keynote speaker Karen Thompson. Pride Dance 8 p.m. Info: NH Pride (603) 382-9308.

Boston ♦ BBWN/BBMN Bi Brunch. 10:45 a.m. Loc'n TBA. Info: 247-6683.

Boston ♦ Prime Timers, an organization for older gay men. Speaker: Bob Kavin, captain of Entre Nous, on "Leather and Lace Clubs of America." 2 to 4 p.m. Lindemann Health Ctr., 25 Staniford St. \$1.

Boston ♦ Lesbian Fun and Games. Smoke and alcohol-free. 338 Newbury St. 7 to 10p.m. Third Saturday each month. \$2 donation.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Jeanette Muzima Trio in Concert. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. 983-9530.

16 SUNDAY

Gloucester/Cape Ann Area ♦ Am Tikva Bike Trip. Novices and experts welcome. Time, location, carpooling: Larry 926-2536. Raindate 6/30.

Sudbury ♦ WOBBLES (W. of Boston Lesbians) Goes Canoeing on Sudbury River. Info: Janis (508) 386-7737.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Writers' Group. 1 to 3 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Softball and Volleyball. 4 to 6 p.m. Magazine Field, Memorial Dr. DOB. Info: Steph 625-9551.

SE Mass ♦ SMUUGLE: S.E. Mass Unitarian Universalist G/L/etc. Third Sunday each month in various south-of-Boston locs. 344-7030.

Boston ♦ Three Poets Read Their Work at Glad Day. Walta Borawski, Perry Brass and David Trinidad. 7 p.m. 673 Boylston St. (across from Copley library). 267-3010.

Boston ♦ Pop Smear in concert. 9:30 p.m. Venus Rising, 11 Lansdowne St. 421-9595.

17 MONDAY

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Partners and Ex-Partners of Incest Survivors. Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Hanover, NH ♦ Panelmaking Workshops for the AIDS Memorial Quilt. First and third Mondays each month. Lutheran Church, 5 Summer St. 7 p.m. Info: Thom (603) 632-4145.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap: "Reviving Old Interests." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 8 to 10 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston (and other) Cable TV ♦ Between Takes: "No Excuses, No Escape." Gay bashing in the historical context of non-mainstream groups as scapegoats. Pride Month G/L focus. 9:30 p.m. on Boston cable A3. Many other cable access channels, week of 6/16 to 6/22 (Cambridge CCTV 6/20 8:30 p.m.)

18 TUESDAY

Framingham ♦ Framingham G/L Youth Group. People 22 and under, meets first and third Tuesdays each month. Civic League Bldg., 214 Concord St. 6 to 7:30 p.m. Info: write P.O. Box 426, S. Framingham, MA 01701.

Boston ♦ Support group for lesbian and single women interested or involved in alternative insemination. First, second, and third Tuesdays each month. Today: those who have inseminated 9+ times. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Second flr. conf. rm., FCHC, 7 Haviland St. Info: Jenifer Firestone 267-0900.

Cambridge ♦ 30+ Lesbian Rap: "Intensity: Positive or Negative." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston ♦ Gay Fathers of Greater Boston: Open Discussion. First and third Tuesday each month. Lindemann Center, 2nd fl. 8 to 10 p.m. Info 742-7897.

19 WEDNESDAY

Boston ♦ Boston NOW Lesbian Rights Task Force. 7 p.m. NOW offices, 971 Comm. Ave. 782-1056.

Worcester ♦ Supporters of Worcester Area G/L Youth. Open to G/L/B youth 21 and under. First and third Wednesday each month. United Congregational Church, 6 Institute Rd. 7p.m. Info: (508)755-0005.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Swing Dance Practice. 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

20 THURSDAY

Boston ♦ "Beyond AIDS 101," an overview of AIDS and HIV. Third Thursday each month. AAC Rm. 401, 131 Clarendon St. Info: 437-6200 *264.

Cambridge ♦ Drop in at DOB Coffee Night. 7 to 9:30 p.m., Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Waltham ♦ Way Out in Waltham Goes to the Movies. 893-0742.

Northampton ♦ Valley Gay Alliance. First and third Thursdays each month. Basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30p.m. (413) 527-5310.

21 FRIDAY

Worcester ♦ Lavender Lunch for Downtown Worcester G/L/B. Third Friday each month. Thai Orchid, 144 Commercial St. 1 p.m.

Boston ♦ Friday Night Video Series: "Pee Wee's Big Adventure." 7 p.m. L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. \$2. 247-2927.

Boston ♦ "Meeting Men and . . . (in the '90s)," a workshop for gay and bisexual men. AAC and FCHC Living Well Series. 8 to 11 p.m. AAC, 131 Clarendon St., 4th flr. Free, but limited space. Register: 437-6200 x499.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Ballroom Dance for L/GM and Friends. 8:30 to 11:30 p.m. First Church of J.P., Centre and Eliot Sts. Beginner's fox trot lesson at 8 p.m. Smoke free. \$5. Info: Jason Thomas 859-9455.

22 SATURDAY

Hartford ♦ Connecticut River Cruise. RSVP by 6/13 w/ \$15 check payable to Hartford Women's Ctr.; SASE to Judy Foetsch, 105 John St. #4, Naugatuck, CT 06770.

NH ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club Huntington Ravine Climb. 6/22 and 6/23. Info: Loren or Cindy 625-8537.

Watertown ♦ DOB Women's Tennis. All abilities. Free. Courts behind Arsenal Mall, Arsenal St. 9 a.m. 628-1038.

Burlington, VT ♦ Vermont Gay Pride March and Rally. Noon at City Hall; march to begin 12:30 p.m. Entertainment 3 to 5 p.m. Dance at Memorial Auditorium 6 to 10 p.m. Info: Ronni (802) 479-1250.

Boston ♦ Slow Dancing at the Center. 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., fourth Saturday each month. Slow dancing lesson 10:30 p.m. by Jason Thomas. G/L Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

23 SUNDAY

North Shore ♦ Wild Women Afternoon Bike Trip. DOB. Details: Carol (508) 532-3069.

Boston ♦ Girth and Mirth Games Day. 2 to 6 p.m. Info: Neil 661-2061.

Boston ♦ Dykes Dialogue: "Buffy Dunker Sharing Her Story." Jenifer Firestone. 4 p.m. L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Provincetown ♦ Phil Gambone reads from "The Language We Use Up Here." 4 p.m. Now Voyager, 357 Commercial St. (508) 487-0848.

Dorchester ♦ Todd and Michael's Silent Movie Night. Mabel Normand in Mack Sennett's silent comedy feature "The Extra Girl." 7 p.m. 288-0391.

24 MONDAY

Cambridge ♦ Hot Lesbian Videos. 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap: "Sexy Humor / Humorous Sex." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 8 to 10 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston (and other) Cable TV ♦ Between Takes: "Life Lessons." Documentary on three persons with AIDS. Pride Month G/L focus. 9:30 p.m. on Boston cable A3. Many other cable access channels, week of 6/23 to 6/29 (Cambridge CCTV 6/27 8:30 p.m.)

25 TUESDAY

Boston ♦ "Clinical Trials: Understanding the Basics." Clinical Partners and AAC. 6 to 7:30 p.m. AAC, 131 Clarendon St., 4th flr. Info and registration: 536-5950.

Boston ♦ "Pre-Conceptions: Legal Issues and Alternative Insemination." 7 p.m. FCHC, 7 Haviland St., 2nd flr. conf. rm. \$5. Info: Jenifer 267-0900 x282.

Cambridge ♦ 30+ Lesbian Rap: "Emotional Content of Commitment." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 7 to 8:30 p.m. 354-8807.



26 WEDNESDAY

Boston ♦ Downtown Lesbians Brown Bag Lunch. 12:30 p.m. Third Wednesday each month (June is an exception). Info: Julie 725-3562.

Boston ♦ Greater Boston Business Council: "The Central Artery / Third Harbor Tunnel Project." Cherrystone's, 100 Atlantic Ave. 6 p.m. \$21. Reservations: 446-7872.

Boston ♦ Coming Out Support Group. The Center, 338 Newbury St. Second and fourth Wednesday each month. 8 p.m. Info: 247-2927.

Cambridge ♦ Denver Women's Chorus. 8 p.m. MIT Kresge Auditorium, 77 Mass. Ave. Tickets \$10 advance, \$12 at door; available at New Words, Glad Day, and by phone: 247-BGMC.

27 THURSDAY

Boston ♦ The Coalition for L/G Civil Rights. Meets every other Thursday. The Center, rm 202K. 338 Newbury St. 6:30 to 8p.m. Info: David 828-3039.

Boston ♦ "(Fire)Works in Progress." Staged readings of short plays and scenes written by participants in HIV+ Playwrighting Workshop. 6/27 and 6/28, 7 to 9 p.m. Club Cabaret, 321 Columbus Ave. \$10. 536-0972.

Boston ♦ "Ayur Veda (Traditional Indian Medicine)." Multicultural AIDS Coalition. FCHC Living Well Series. 7 to 9 p.m. FCHC, 7 Haviland St. 267-0900 x287.

Dorchester ♦ Dorchester GALA Licking, Sticking, Stuffing Get-Together. Info: Barry 288-1847 or Hotline 825-3737.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Open Mike with Betsy Salkind. Comediennes and folk singers. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. Sign up: 983-9530.

28 FRIDAY

Boston ♦ "(Fire)Works in Progress." 7 to 9 p.m. See 6/27.

Boston ♦ Friday Night Video Series: "1776." 7 p.m. L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. \$2. 247-2927.

Boston ♦ Liturgy for All Those Affected by AIDS. Paulist Ctr., 5 Park St. 7 p.m. Info: Fr. Connor 742-4660.

Boston ♦ T.G.I.F. Boston Professional Ass'n meets at Club Cafe Moonshine (back bar) for casual cocktails and mixing. Last Friday each month. 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. \$3.

SATURDAYS

Boston ♦ Frontrunners. Meet at Metropolitan Health Club for 2 to 5-mi. run along Charles. Lockers and showers complimentary. 10 a.m. Also: Tues. 12:15 p.m. at MHC; Wed. 6:45 p.m. at Hatch Shell. 282-0013.

Cambridge ♦ Single Mothers' Support Group. Free drop-in group with child care, alternate Saturdays. Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 11am-12:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston ♦ Pink Flamingos. TV/TS of New England. 4 to 6p.m. 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. 247-2927.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Women's Coffeehouse. Musical entertainment, usually. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. \$5 suggested donation. 983-9530.

SUNDAYS

Boston ♦ Different Strokes Swim Team. Coached workouts for swimmers of all abilities. 10:15 at Boston City Hosp. swimming pool. Ed 767-0449.

Boston ♦ Boston Alliance of G/L Youth (BAGLY) Drop-In Center. St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 Bowdoin. (800) 42BAGLY.

Boston ♦ Work Issues Support Group. 2 to 4 p.m. G/L Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St.

Boston ♦ Boston Strikers Soccer Club. Weekly novice and club scrimmages. All levels. 3 p.m. Info: Erik 423-0929 or Jeff 876-7612.

Boston ♦ Metropolitan Community Church Worship/Fellowship. 131 Cambridge St. (near Gov't Ctr.). 7 p.m. Info: Rev. Tanis 437-0420.

Boston ♦ Narcotics Anonymous. L/GM. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 8 p.m. 247-2927.

Boston ♦ The Gay Dating Show, WUNR 1600AM. 10:30pm-2:30 a.m.

MONDAYS

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 12:25 p.m. 262-3456.

Boston ♦ Monday Night Dinners for PWAs and Friends: about 100 people meeting every Monday at AAC for dinner. No reservations required. 6 p.m. AAC, 131 Clarendon St. 437-6200.

Dorchester ♦ Alcoholics Anonymous. First Parish Church, Meeting House Hill. Beginners 6:30, hardhats 8 p.m.

Boston ♦ Boston Bisexual Women's Network Coordinating Comm. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Worcester ♦ AIDS Project Worcester. A support group for family, friends, concerned others dealing with HIV. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508)755-3773.

Boston ♦ Northern Lights Alternatives Monday Night Rap Group. Talk to others living with HIV. 38 Appleton St. 7:30-9 p.m. Info: Ann O'Rourke 694-0964.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap Group. The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 8-10 p.m. 354-8807.

TUESDAYS

Providence, RI ♦ ACT UP/Rhode Island. Call for meeting place (401) 461-4191.

Boston ♦ ACT UP/Boston. The Living Center, YWCA, 140 Clarendon St. 7 p.m. 49-ACTUP.

Medford Radio ♦ "We the People" — with feminist Sheila Parks. WMFO 91.5FM. 7-9a.m. Tufts U. radio.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ G/B Men and Their Significant Others. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

Boston ♦ L/G Freedom Trail Band Rehearsals. No audition necessary. Mass College of Art, Longwood and Brookline Ave. 7:15 p.m. 266-0628.

WEDNESDAYS

Boston ♦ Sales Networks Program for G/L Business Owners and Supporters of the Community. 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. The Center, 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. Registration required: Marc Spencer 262-2400.

Hyde Park ♦ Women's Pick-Up Hockey. MDC Hyde Park Rink (near Dedham). 8 to 9 a.m. Info: Janice 326-1600 x350.

Boston ♦ Boston Alliance of G/L Youth (BAGLY). Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6p.m.; women and men meet separately 6:45 to 7:30; general meeting 7:30p.m. (800) 42BAGLY.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Al-Anon. Wheelchair accessible. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. 354-8807.

Worcester ♦ Supporters of Worcester Area G/L Youth (SWAGLY). Social support grp. for youths 22 and under. 7 to 9 p.m. United Congregational Church, 6 Institute Road. 7 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-0005.

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 7:30 p.m. 262-3456.

Bridgewater ♦ S. Shore G/L Alliance. 7:30 to 9 p.m. Bridgewater Ctr. Primarily a social group of age 25+, but all welcome. Info: Glen 293-5183 or Dave 294-0367.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ who are in Substance Abuse Recovery. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7:30 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

THURSDAYS

Boston ♦ Boston Area Rape Crisis Center drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Boston ♦ Names Project Quilting Bee — for the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Sewing supplies and support provided. Boston Living Ctr., 140 Clarendon St. 7th flr. 7 to 9 p.m. Info 451-9003.

Somerville ♦ Thursday Night Dinner Pgm. People w/ and concerned w/ AIDS. Family style. Reservations req. 6:15. Coll. Ave. Un. Methodist Church, 14 Chapel St. \$1. 666-4130.

Portsmouth, NH ♦ Out and About. A lesbian social and support group. Info: Keryn (603) 749-5852.

Provincetown ♦ Positive PWA Coalition Weekly Rap Session. 7:30. 155 Bradford St. Peer led. (508) 487-3998.

Boston ♦ The Group. Discussion and social hour. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 266-1129.

Cambridge ♦ GAMIT Study Break. (GAMIT = Gays at MIT.) GAMIT lounge, room 50-306, 142 Memorial Dr.

FRIDAYS

Watertown ♦ GLOW: G/L of Watertown. 395-4664.

Boston ♦ GCN Friday Night Stuffing Party. Come stuff the paper, eat pizza, and make new friends. GCN, 62 Berkeley St. 5 p.m. 426-4469.

Boston ♦ Friday Night At The Movies. Boston Living Center. 140 Clarendon St. Free. 7 p.m. 236-1012.

Thelma and Louise

Written by Callie Khouri.

Directed by Ridley Scott. With

Geena Davis and Susan Sarandon.

Now playing at theaters nationally.

Reviewed by Kelly Gaines

Although I visit the video store and movie theaters on a frighteningly regular basis, I've never seen or experienced anything quite like *Thelma and Louise*. In the now-annual summer sea of films dominated by the Great White Male, this gutsy, enormously entertaining and ultimately subversive movie stands out as an uncompromising work for and about women.

While men, gay and straight, may admire *Thelma and Louise*, it is clearly for women. When I saw the movie, most of the cheers and laughter came from women, including myself. Indeed, the movie works to make men uncomfortable and uneasy on some level (which is just fine with me). A woman friend told me that after she saw *Thelma and Louise*, she overheard two women talking in the rest room. One said to her friend, "I just feel like going out and buying a gun right now." Are any boys getting nervous yet?

What makes the film really special, though, is that while containing all these heavy-yet-empowering themes, *Thelma and Louise* is just a great movie. It works on many different levels and successfully tackles several genres.

Although the mainstream marketing campaign is going for the "women's film" angle, *Thelma and Louise* redefines that classification. The last couple of Hollywood-proclaimed "women's films" I can remember are *Steel Magnolias* and *Pretty Woman*, neither of which is in a league with *Thelma and Louise*. Of course, there are some similarities among all these "women's films": women reacting to men; more "emotional" and "sensitive" moments than in most films; and (less so with *Pretty Woman*) women bonding with women.

Thelma and Louise embraces all these ideas—and turns them on their heads. Yes, the women are still reacting to men, but with insight, independence and guns; the sensitive moments are integral to the plot and not throw-away tearjerker bits; and, finally, the woman-to-woman bonding that occurs is important in and of itself, not as a substitute or a gateway to "real" relationships with

Thelma, Louise, Susan and Geena

The summer's most uncompromising movie about and for women



(l-r) Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis

men.

The movie is also a twist on the so-called buddy film, which by definition is male. From *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* to the *Lethal Weapons* to *Midnight Run*, the buddy film has first and foremost been about male friendship; a couple of guys with their horses and/or guns shooting the shit and taking on the world. Until *Thelma and Louise*, only men could be buddies and women, well, they couldn't seem to rise above pettiness and competition, usually sparked by a threat to "their men."

The camaraderie between stars Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis is remarkable. The energy they display on the screen generates a sense of mutual respect and, above all, fun. These two characters have genuine affection for each other and are no happier than when they are together.

Taking on yet another genre, *Thelma and Louise* is also a brilliant example of the road picture. Part Hope and Crosby, part *Something Wild*, *Thelma and Louise* is in

some sense a movie about two women having a good old time.

Although I don't wish to diminish the skills of these two very fine actors, the chemistry between them extends beyond the silver screen. In interviews publicizing the movie, both Sarandon and Davis have talked at length about what the film means to them and both seem to proudly embrace the movie's truly unique, pro-woman message. In a recent issue of *People*, Davis practically gushed about Sarandon, saying Susan had become her role model and mentor. This project was clearly personal for both women.

Many dykes have probably been big fans of Sarandon's for a while, especially since her lesbo-erotic role in *The Hunger*. Even in *The Witches of Eastwick*—which was ultimately misogynist—it was fun to see Susan gallivanting with Cher and Michelle Pfeiffer. While I've always been a fan of hers, I find myself liking her more and more with each role. Although the yuppie-fantasy *White Palace* was pretty awful, Sarandon's

performance as the working-class waitress makes the film worth seeing. With *Thelma and Louise*, Sarandon has established herself in my mind as the queen of "white-trash" characters. Like Jodie Foster, Angelica Houston and a few others, Sarandon has shown a desire to portray real women who lead complicated lives that are sometimes unsettling and unflattering.

I've never been a big fan of Davis—her penchant for playing the quirky, offbeat-yet-kindhearted girlfriend never really got my motor going. But she really won me over in *Thelma and Louise*. While it takes her character a little longer to really come alive, once she does, watch out. There are a couple of scenes in which Davis is tougher than tough, and the one in which she makes a cop cry is almost more than you could ask for.

Although some people have expressed disappointment about the film's ending because they consider it depressing, I think it was pretty near perfect. Since I don't want to give away the ending, all I can say is that anything short of what happens would have compromised the film's integrity. I don't think it's about hopelessness; I think it's about understanding and awareness. It's about finally seeing the world for what it really is and taking control of your own life within the chaos. Personally, I found the ending uplifting and very, very feminist.

I don't think I've said enough about the humor in the film. Sarandon and Davis are the beneficiaries of one of the most literate scripts to come along in a while. The banter between them brought tears to my eyes at times, and there were at least three full-fledged knee-slappers.

I've really enjoyed reading male reviewers' reactions to *Thelma and Louise*. The viciousness and utter hypocrisy with which some men have decried the "violence" in the movie is laughable. The actual violence that does take place is always reactive and, for women, justified. It's clear that these women aren't trying to be Arnold Schwarzenegger; they've just been pushed too damn far and they're sick of it. The actual amount of violence towards other people is nothing compared to an episode of *Top Cops* or *Law and Order* or any movie with Arnold or Steven Seagal.

What's great is that I'll bet *Thelma and Louise* and Susan and Geena don't care what the male reviewers are saying. □

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